

USSN: 10/025,742

Art Unit: 2133

Response to Final action mailed 03/24/2005

**Amendments to the Specification**

Please replace the paragraph commencing at page 10, line 6 with the following paragraph:

-- ~~Still referring~~ Referring to FIG. 2B, data traffic entering the communications link 218(i) into line card 206A in I/O shelf 202A proceeds through link 216(i) to FIC 208A. Data traffic passes through the SAC 210A and enters the switching core 212. Data traffic is routed through the switching core 212 to an appropriate egress path and sent in an egress direction to a communication network along the selected egress path through SAC 210B, link 214(e), FIC 208B, link 216(e), line card 206B, and finally link 218(e) towards an adjacent switching node (not shown). A similar datapath may be provided in the opposite direction for data traffic entering link 218(i) into line card 206B, and exiting through link 218(e) from line card 206A. FIG. 2B thus provides a possible layout of various components which may be found within a switching node such as the switching node 106A described above. However, it is to be understood that FIG. 2B provides only a possible layout of the components and that the particular layout and the particular data flows described are not limiting. For example, data traffic entering the link 218(i) into line card 206A may be processed in the switching core 212 and directed back towards line card 206A in a loop-back fashion.—

Please replace the paragraph commencing at page 10, line 6 with the following paragraph:

— Now referring to FIG. 4A, shown and generally referred to by reference numeral 400A are the various components of FIGS. 2A and 2B with data traffic flows more clearly illustrated and the dashed outlines of the I/O shelves 202A, 202B and the switching shelf 204 removed. In FIG. 4A, located at a first end of the components 400A is an ingress communications link 404A which connects to the line card 206A. The datapath beginning with link 404A passes through the various links and components shown in FIG. 4A and exits at an egress communications link 406A exiting another line card 206B. The datapath corresponds to the path previously described with reference to FIG. 2B. A second datapath begins at an ingress communications link 404B which enters line card 206B and exits at communications link 406B exiting line card 206A. --